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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

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[REDACTED] SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 6526

DECAPTIONED

E.O. 12065: XDS-4 9/4/2001 (FRIEDMAN, T.B.) OR-P
TAGS: SHUM AR
SUBJECT: REPORTED KIDNAPPINGS

1. [REDACTED] SUMMARY. TWO LEFT-WING PERONISTS WERE KIDNAPPED IN BUENOS AIRES SEPTEMBER 2 BY A GROUP OF ARMED MEN WHO REPORTEDLY IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES AS MEMBERS OF THE FEDERAL POLICE. THE FEDERAL POLICE HAVE DENIED PARTICIPATION IN THE REPORTED KIDNAPPINGS AND DECLARED THAT THEY ARE INVESTIGATING IT. THE POLICE ALSO HINTED THAT THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR IT SOUGHT MAXIMUM POSSIBLE PUBLICITY. IT IS VERY UNLIKELY THAT THIS OPERATION WAS ORDERED BY THE VIOLA GOVERNMENT, WHICH CAN ONLY BE DEEPLY EMBARRASSED BY IT. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) ON SEPTEMBER 2 A GROUP OF MORE THAN TEN ARMED MEN SEIZED FORMER PERONIST DEPUTY JULIO BARBARO AND HIS ASSOCIATE JUAN GALLEGO FROM BARBARO'S OFFICE IN DOWNTOWN BUENOS AIRES. OTHERS PRESENT IN THE OFFICE REPORTEDLY CLAIM THAT THE MEN STATED THAT THEY WERE TAKING THE TWO FOR A MEETING WITH COL. ARIAS DUVAL,
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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WHO HEADS THE SECURITY DECTION OF THE ARGENTINE FEDERAL POLICE. SUBSEQUENTLY, RELATIVES WERE UNABLE TMILOCATE

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BARBARO AND GALLEGO IN ANY PLACE OF DETENTION. HABEAS CORPUS PETITIONS FOR THE TWO MEN WERE FILED SEPTEMBER 3. HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS BEGAN TO ALERT THE LOCAL PRESS AND GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY ABOUT THIS REPORTED KIDNAPPING SEPTEMBER 3. MOST OF THE BUENOS AIRES PRESS REPORTED IT AS HEADLINE NEWS SEPTEMBER 4.

3. (U) THE FEDERAL POLICE ISSUED TWO COMMUNIQUEES SEPTEMBER 3. THE FIRST ANNOUNCED THAT THE POLICE WERE INVESTIGATING THE ALLEGED KIDNAPPING. IT ALSO STATED THAT RELATIVES OF THE MEN WHO WERE PRESENT WHEN THE KIDNAPPING TOOK PLACE HEARD THE KIDNAPPERS STATE THAT (1) THERE SHOULD BE NO ATTEMPT TO CONTACT THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR FOR TWO HOURS, (2) THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS SHOULD BE CONTACTED LATER, (3) A HABEAS CORPUS SHOULD BE FILED FOR THE TWO MEN. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE POLICE ISSUED ANOTHER, SHORTER

STATEMENT WHICH REITERATED THAT THE POLICE WERE INVESTIGATING, ADDED THAT DECLARATIONS HAD BEEN TAKEN WHICH CONFIRMED THE STATEMENTS MADE BY THE PREVIOUS COMMUNIQUE AND ADDED THAT THE BUENOS AIRES PROVINCIAL POLICE WERE COOPERATING IN THE INVESTIGATION.

4. (U) ALSO ON SEPTEMBER 4, THE INTRANSIGENT PERONIST MOVEMENT WHICH BARBARO HELPED FOUND HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE TO PROTEST THE KIDNAPPINGS. AMONG OTHER THINGS, SPOKESMAN FOR THE MIP DENIED THAT THE KIDNAPPERS HAD GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS OF ANY KIND TO THOSE WHO WITNESSED THE SEIZURE, ADDING THAT RELATIVES

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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OF EITHER MAN WERE PRESENT WHEN THEY WERE SEIZED.

5. [REDACTED] COMMENT: A GENERAL CONSENSUS, WHICH WE SHARE, HAS QUICKLY DEVELOPED HERE THAT THE MEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS KIDNAPPING WERE OPERATING WITHOUT THE CONSENT OR ORDERS OF THE GOVERNMENT. HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS ALSO BELIEVE RESPONSIBLE GOA OFFICIALS ARE INNOCENT OF INVOLVEMENT IN THIS MATTER. MOST PROBABLY, THE AUTHORS ARE MEMBERS OF ONE OR ANOTHER OF THE SECURITY SERVICES -- IT IS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TODAY FOR ANYBODY ELSE TO PUT OVER TEN ARMED MEN WITH WALKIE TALKIES ON THE STREETS OF BUENOS AIRES.

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6. [REDACTED] THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAS VERY CLEARLY IMPLIED
TO US THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER HIGH-
RANKING GOA AUTHORITIES ARE PERSONALLY SEEKING

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CLARIFICATION OF THIS CASE. HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS
HAVE TOLD US THE POLICE ARE ALSO INVESTIGATING WITH
SEEMING VIGOR AND ENTHUSIASM.

7. [REDACTED] BARBARO WAS THE GUIDING SPIRIT BEHIND THE
MIP, WHICH OPPOSES ANY POLITICAL COMPROMISE WITH THE
MILITARY AND WANTS A RAPID RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE.
UNLIKE OTHER POLITICAL GROUPS HERE, IT ALSO SEEKS TO
MAKE HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE DISAPPEARED AN ISSUE.
MIP VIRTUALLY CONSTITUTES THE LEFT WING OF PERONISM --
ITS LEADER IS FORMER SENATOR VICENTE SAADI, AND ONE
OF ITS PROMINENT LIGHTS IS FORMER DEPUTY NILDA
GARRE, THE WIDOW OF ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT
TERRORISTS OF THE 1970'S, ABAL MEDINA.

8. [REDACTED]

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9. [REDACTED] REPORTEDLY, A MIP DECLARATION WHICH BARBARO HELPED PREPARE WAS PRINTED AND ENDORSED BY THE MONTONEROS IN MEXICO. BARBARO SUBSEQUENTLY DENOUNCED FIRMEINICH AND THE MONTONEROS. HOWEVER, THERE IS SOME SPECULATION THAT THE ACTIVITIES OF MIP, COUPLED WITH THIS SEEMING ENDORSEMENT OF THE MONTONEROS, MAY HAVE SERIOUSLY COMPROMISED BARBARO IN THE EYES OF SOME SECURITY SERVICE. IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT ANY RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL WHO WAS LOYAL TO PRESIDENT VIOLA COULD HAVE AUTHORIZED THESE KIDNAPPINGS. MOREOVER, WITH FOREIGN MINISTER CAMILION STILL IN THE UNITED STATES AND GENERAL WALTERS JUST HAVING LEFT ARGENTINA AT THE TIME OF THE SEIZURES, THE AUTHORS OF THIS ACT WOULD SEEM TO HAVE HAD LITTLE CONCERN FOR US-ARGENTINE RELATIONS.

10. [REDACTED] WHATEVER THE MOTIVATION OF THE MEN WHO ORDERED THE KIDNAPPINGS, THE INEVITABLE RESULT IT TO EMBARRASS PRESIDENT VIOLA UNLESS THIS UNFORTUNATE EVENT IS CLEARED UP IN A SATISFACTORY MANNER. SHLAUDEMAN

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